(c) what is the quantum of thorium available in the country and the names of the places where such deposits have been found ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINSTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BHUVNESH CHATURVEDI) : (a) India has recently offered a nuclear research reactor of an advanced design for export under the safeguard of International Atomic Energy Agency. The design envisages using only urganium as fuel. The reactor is designed for utilisation in basic and applied research for production of radioisotopes.

(b) In response to an invitation from Thailand for making a prequalification bid, India has recently submitted relevant information for setting up a research reactor.

(c) About four lakh tonnes of Thorium Oxide (THO_2) contained in 4,558 million tonnes of Monazite are available in beach and inland placers of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Orissa Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and Bihar.

Supply of Taps Fuel

864. DR. BAPU KALDATE : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Indo-US controversy over the supply of Tarapur fuel has deepened as U.S. will neither allow to reprocess the spent fuel at Tarapur nor allow to use any nuclear fuel at the power stations that are not subjected to international inspection ;

(b) if so, what are the implications involved stating the reaction of the Government with regard thereto ; and

(c) the manner in which Government propose to keep the plant operational ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE AND THE MINSTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF ATOMIC ENERGY AND SPACE WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BHUVNESH CHATURVEDI) : (a) and (b) The US supply of fuel for Tarapur Atomic Power Station (TAPS) stopped in 1980. The 1963 Bilateral Cooperation Agreement between the US and India for setting up of Tarapur Atomic Power Station (TAPS) expired on October 24, 1993. It is proposed to continue operation of TAPS with a fuel core consisting of indigenously fabricated MOX (Mixed Uranium—Plutonium Oxide) fuel and Low Enriched Uranium (LEU) fuel. For this TAPS spent fuel has to be reprocessed to obtain the plutonium required for the MOX fuel. As a confidence building measure, the Government of India made a voluntary offer to IAEA in August this year to apply safeguards on the nuclear material used in TAPS on a bilateral basis between India and the IAEA ; this offer is to take effect after the expiry of the trilateral safeguards agreements on 24-10-1993. An adhoc arrangement valid till 1st March 1994 providing for safeguards has been entered into between the Government of India and the IAEA.

(c) It is proposed to continue the operation of TAPS under the arrangements mentioned above.

Hike in Drug Prices

865. SHRI INDER KUMAR GUJRAL : Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the write-up in the Times of India of 1st September, 1993 regarding runway increase in drug prices ; and

(b) what action is being taken by Government to arrest this increase ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRONICS AND DEPARTMENT OF OCEAN DE-